



TRANSFORM YOUR LIFE WITH THE BIBLE'S WAY TO WEIGHT LOSS



July 2005

Matthew 6:33:

But seek first his kingdom and his righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well.

FIRST PLACE

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National Director Carole Lewis

Associate Director . Kay Smith

Leadership Training
Director Nancy Taylor

Newsletter . . . Sheila Robbins

Dear Friends,

I get excited when I think about family gatherings. We have a big family gathering planned for my husband Johnny's side of the family July 2nd. Johnny has three brothers and with their children and grandchildren, we plan to have over fifty people at our home on that day celebrating with food and fun.

When we chose the theme of *Jubilation* for this month's E-Newsletter, we were thinking about July 4th and the celebrating that accompanies it. Families, neighbors, and entire communities come together to celebrate the birthday of our country with fireworks, cookouts, watermelon, and homemade ice cream.

In the 25th chapter of Leviticus, the Bible talks about the year of Jubilee. This was a year of Sabbath for the Israelites to celebrate the goodness of God. Debts were forgiven, land returned and slaves set free. So the word *Jubilee* and the word *Jubilation* have to do with celebrating the goodness of our God.

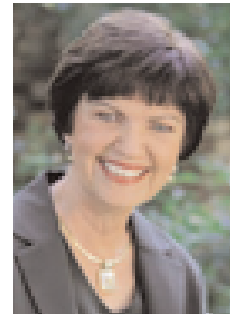
First Place is looking forward to our own Jubilee in 2006, the 25th anniversary of our program which began in March 1981. Leading up to our Jubilee year, we have three remaining First Place events in 2005.

Our Leadership Summit, July 28-30, is a time we celebrate with the leaders of First Place. As we share our joys, heartaches and victories during this three-day celebration, we realize that without our Lord Jesus, there would be no celebration, because He is our reason to celebrate. Our leaders come together as part of the First Place family of God and what a sweet time it is.

September 2005, is also a month of celebration for First Place. I'll be in Canada celebrating with our First Place Canadian friends September 6-10, after which our First Place staff will be in Cincinnati, Ohio September 16-17 for our First Place National Conference.

October 6-13 closes out the celebrations for 2005 with our annual F.O.C.U.S. Week at Round Top, Texas. This is an entire week of celebrating God's goodness to us by spending time with Him in praise and adoration. This includes spending time with God's children in fellowship, exercise and partaking delicious meals together.

Our 2006 Jubilee starts with a bang January 14-15, when the First Place family comes together to kick off our Jubilee year by participating in the



Carole Lewis
National Director
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Carole Lewis

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Houston Marathon. We'll have a Workshop/Rally Saturday, January 14, culminating with a "Carbo-loading" dinner and the distribution of our special Marathon T-Shirts for the race on Sunday. Some of our First Place people will be participating in the 5K (3 mile) run, some in the half Marathon (13 miles) and some in the Marathon (26 miles). Some will walk and some will run and some will participate by cheering us on and handing out water along the route, but all will be celebrating 25 years of First Place as part of our First Place family. You can register for the Marathon at <http://www.houstonmarathon.com>. After you register, you will receive the training program for the race you choose to walk/run.

The next big Jubilee event is a trip to the Holy Land, March 20-30, 2006. We prayed about what might be the most significant event for our First Place year of Jubilee, and we believe that traveling to the land where Jesus lived, died, and rose again was the ultimate celebration of God's goodness to us. We are limiting this trip to the first 50 who sign up, so that our trip together will be an intimate time of family. You can read more about the trip under our Events section of the First Place Website.

The last two events of our Jubilee year will be our annual Leadership Summit, July 27-29, 2006, and our F.O.C.U.S. Week, October 12-19, 2006.

We are praying right now that every one of you reading this newsletter will be able to attend at least one of the events listed above. We are also praying that the remainder of 2005 and all of 2006 will be a true year of jubilation and blessing for all our First Place family.

Go to Events on our website, www.firstplace.org, and learn more about these exciting Jubilee events.

Carole Lewis

First Place Testimony

I wanted to share a personal success story with you. My story is not about weight loss, but about health.

It started about a few months ago when I did not feel right. My body was numb on the left side and on my head. I was rather concerned, so that night at about 9:30 p.m. I went to the emergency room. I was thinking that I was having a stroke or a heart attack, but I am only a 31 year-old man.

I sat in the hospital for five hours while they tried to figure out what was going on. After a long night, it was determined that I was most likely a Diabetic. The next day, I went to the doctor and she thought, "How can this be?" "You are young, and to be honest a little underweight." They checked my blood sugar and it came out very high, even after a fast. My blood sugar averaged out to be 510, which a normal reading should be between 90-130. It was dangerously high. The nurse said this was the second highest she had ever seen in her life. The doctor gave me much information and three medicines to take, including insulin.

I was rather scared! My wife and I had to figure out a plan and she said, "Let's do First Place," because she was a leader at one time. I started the program the next day and followed it exactly. The next week, I went to the doctor and she took me off insulin and one of the medicines, which leaves me with one medicine that I still take. She also told me that by keeping this up, I should be off all medicine by my six-month visit.

I am very thankful for First Place; it gave me my health back. I hope you can use this story to let people know that it is all about health, not just weight loss.

Pastor Shawn Rittmiller
First Baptist Church
Freeland, MI





Talkin' With Kay

Dear First Place Friends,

In July we enjoy family celebrations! Family reunions and family cookouts are big events for our family this month.

I have fond past memories of the pace of life slowing down in July as we enjoyed summer events, but those are just memories! Life now seems to continue in fast mode even in the summer. I have found a new product that fits into that lifestyle. If you are planning a family or neighborhood cook-out, instead of grabbing that meat at the supermarket that is already in a marinade sauce, you might want to check out the Mrs. Dash "10 minute" marinades. You don't have to plan dinner hours or days ahead. The best news about these marinades is the one-step solution to a massive problem in our goal toward a healthy lifestyle - salt. Most of us have gotten on board with lowering the fat and sugar in our meal planning, but salt can still be a challenge in our desire to serve and eat tasteful food.

Roughly 45% of American adults have either hypertension (high blood pressure) or pre-hypertension, and our salt-laden food supply is a major culprit. Until now the only way to dodge the salt has been to cook from scratch and hold the saltshaker. Mrs. Dash has introduced several

different flavors which can be used for much more than the usual chicken or fish. The Zesty Garlic Herb is great on grilled zucchini, peppers, mushrooms, onions, or asparagus. This flavor can even turn into a great low-salt salad dressing by adding a little olive oil.

Instead of up to 1,000 mg. of sodium you would get in two tablespoons of a regular marinade, you get zero. I just pray some of the other food industry sees the benefit of meeting the needs of Americans during this crisis of health diseases.

Check out the Mrs. Dash website at www.mrsdash.com for some healthy, low-salt recipes. You may still need to make minor adjustments for some of the recipes to be completely First Place.



Kay Smith
Associate Director
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May God bless each of you!
Kay Smith





Leadership Training

Jubilation Retrieval



Nancy Taylor
Leadership Training Director
ntaylor@firstplace.org

Are you a jubilant leader? Jubilation is defined as, “uninhibited rejoicing in the celebration of a victory or success.” It has been hard to be a jubilant leader this past session, as each week the members would gain as many pounds as they lost. I tried challenges, games, care groups, and prizes for those who met the challenges. Each week someone brought in a First Place lunch. We had a personal trainer who led an exercise class before our meeting each week and presented a fitness spotlight at our weekly meeting. I started the session with great excitement and hope. However, my excitement gave way to disappointment and discouragement. What was I doing wrong? My bag of tricks is empty! I gave my all, but with seemingly little or no progress. I would have to say that I am not a jubilant leader at this point.

As I prepared to write my monthly article, I discovered that July’s newsletter was to be centered around the concept of jubilation and I was having a hard time being jubilant. The discipline of scripture memory has taught me to keep seeking truth, even through the hard times. So that is what I did- I sought truth. When I focused on the word jubilation, my mind went immediately to Psalm 100. The Psalm begins, “Shout joyfully to the Lord, all the earth. Serve the Lord with gladness; come before Him with joyful singing.” My eyes kept going back to “serve the Lord with gladness.” That was my answer! Leaders are to serve the Lord with gladness. It is all about the attitude of the heart. As I studied Psalm 100, I discovered some practical ways to retrieve my jubilation that had slipped away over the session:

- ✓ **Come before Him. (v 2)** Having a consistent quiet time is essential in harvesting a jubilant attitude. I had gotten into a rut of making my quiet times just a way to check off my Bible study commitment, rather than really coming before a Holy God with reverence and awe. I now set aside my Bible study book and first focus on God, spend time praising Him for who He is and thanking Him for what He has done in my life.
- ✓ **Recognize that God is God and you are not. (v.3)** In my plans for the session, I left out a key ingredient: God! Wow, I had relied on my bag of tricks to get me through the session, rather than relying on God’s creative power and strength.
- ✓ **Live as God’s people. (v.3)** We are His people and the sheep of His pasture. We were discussing sheep in our First Place class this week and my co-leader gave some interesting facts about sheep and their shepherd. She said that many times there would be several shepherds traveling together with each having their own flock. They would corral them all together and even though they had no visible markings, they were able to separate them again when it was time to move on. She said the sheep knew the voice of their shepherd and would come when their shepherd called them. As God’s sheep, we know His voice and as His people, we are able to enter His

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Nancy Taylor

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gates with thanksgiving because of that knowledge. Just knowing God personally should cause us to be jubilant sheep, kicking up our heels as He leads us day by day.

✓ **Have a thankful attitude. (vs. 4-5)**

Even though my class did not lose much weight and they seemed a little lackadaisical, I can still choose to be a jubilant leader. It is a choice. Proverbs 15:15 is one of my all time favorite attitude verses: "All the days of the afflicted are bad, but a cheerful heart has a continual feast." (NAS) When I choose to be cheerful, thankful or jubilant, it is amazing what a feast of blessings I discover! As I went through my class roster, I discovered many answers to prayer, memorized verses, new relationships, healed relationships, new jobs, safe trips, and restored joy. There was truly a reason to be a jubilant leader!

If you find yourself in the same boat I have been in, jump out and swim in the ocean of God's amazing feast of blessings! I pray that you will become the jubilant leader that will lead your precious members to also find the joy that only comes by placing Jesus first in life.

Lead On! Nancy Taylor

Leadership Tip

This month I did not receive any creative ideas or tips to share with you from fellow leaders. So, let me give you some suggestions of how to seek support as a leader:

- 1** Start an area leader's support group. If there is not a networking leader near you, then take the lead and search out other First Place leaders in your area. Invite them to meet you for lunch one Saturday at the local café. Share ideas, challenges and victories. Pray together and share information about your upcoming sessions. This can be as casual as you would like or more structured, meeting in a church with a "program." The main purpose is to encourage one another.
- 2** Attend an Area Leader Meeting if one is offered near you.
- 3** Attend a workshop or conference near you. Look through the events section of our website to locate an event near you.
- 4** No events near you? Then host a workshop or rally at your church. Contact Nancy Taylor at ntaylor@firstplace.org for more information.
- 5** Attend the Leadership Summit on July 28-30 in Houston, Texas for a Texas-sized dose of encouragement and support!
http://www.firstplace.org/leadership_summit.html

Please send your creative ideas or leadership tips to Nancy Taylor at ntaylor@firstplace.org and they will be published in this section in the coming months!





Bev's Footnotes

From Motivation to Jubilation

John 10:10

"The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy: I have come that they may have life and have it to the full."

What we have here is basic math - addition and subtraction. Jesus will add to your current life and the enemy will attempt to take away from your current life...plus and minus. As I work with God's people, challenging them and teaching them to get up and move, I see this scripture actually being applied. Lives are literally moving from the minus column to the plus column. These lives are having a fitness revival. Here are a few jubilation testimonies of lives that have literally moved from minus to plus, from the thief mode into the Shepherd mode.

- ✓ Wanda has frequent migraine headaches. After walking for two weeks, she has had no headaches.
- ✓ Beth deals with depression. She now gets off her couch into the sunshine to walk, thus Beth has had a "faith lift". She said she actually feels happy in her mind.
- ✓ Diane is a cancer patient who is on chemo. Just walking has given her a new lease on life.
- ✓ Fifty eight year-old Lisa, who was down about getting old, now says she feels better than she did at twenty eight. She is going to run a marathon next year.
- ✓ Brandy, who weighed 395 lbs when she began First Place and her daily fitness program, said if she had known it was going to be this much fun and this easy, she would have gotten up sooner. She has now lost 98 lbs.
- ✓ Nicole, who has been walking each morning for five weeks, cried when she told me she had gone one on one in basketball with her 15 year old son. Both she and her son were blessed



Beverly Henson

Certified Personal Trainer
Bevh1952@comcast.net

because she made the decision to get up and move.

- ✓ Chris, the father of a son who is a cross country runner, began walking with a goal of being able to run with his son. Last week he and his son ran together for the first time. It was truly a time of jubilation for Chris and Bryan.

The thief steals your will to move.

Jesus will give it back fuller than before.

The thief kills the joy to move.

Jesus gives life back to your workout.

The thief destroys your hope that you can do it again.

Jesus rebuilds your faith and hope to the point you look forward to the next workout.

Glory to the Father for "spiritual crime prevention." Lives have been vandalized and burglarized by our enemy the devil. The good news...Jesus can turn the crime scene into a revival scene...C.S.I. Jesus style.

We are Pressing On! Make the decision today and begin having a fitness revival in your life. It is a day of jubilation to praise the Lord for great things He has done.

Press On! Bev Henson

Acts 17:28

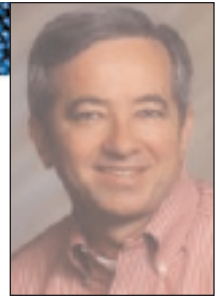
"In Him we live and move and have our being."

Beverly Henson is a conference and rally speaker for the First Place ministry. She is also a Bible teacher and certified personal trainer. Beverly joined First Place in July 1997 and has lost 160 pounds. First Place has given Beverly a powerful testimony. She is the First Place Director and the Director of Wellness Ministries at Northcrest Baptist Church in Meridian, MS.. She is also an area Networking Leader for First Place in Mississippi. Beverly has a genuine love of proclaiming the word of God to His people.





Re-Jubilated



Dr. Bill Heston
University Chaplain,
Howard Payne University
Brownwood, Texas
Bheston@hputx.edu

Wouldn't we all like a fresh start? When I worked with university students, I was often asked if I would like to go back to that age and do things differently. My answer was yes and no. Yes, if I could possess the lessons I have learned from life and also have the energy of a young adult, but no, if it means go through it all again. Once is enough; however, a new beginning in the present, even with my scars and some regrets, would be welcomed.

In the earliest days of the Jewish faith, many feasts, fasts and celebrations were introduced to them in order to keep their focus on their special relationship with Jehovah. One of these was the "Year of Jubilee." It was to occur every 50 years [starting the year after seven times seven years.] This was a year of rest and restoration. The land was to be given rest [a lesson scientists now recognize and recommend crop rotation and other ways to rest and restore the land]. Debts were to be forgiven and property was to be returned to the families who had inherited it. In addition, slaves were to be set free.

"...on the Day of Atonement sound the trumpet throughout your land...and proclaim liberty throughout the land to all its inhabitants. It shall be a jubilee for you..."
Leviticus 24:27

Although there is little evidence that this practice was followed strictly, the emphasis on there being an end to hopelessness is a refreshing message of faith.

Early in our marriage, my wife, Angie and I were given a wonderful gift of a trip to the Holy Land. We were grateful, but did not know what to expect. In addition, special arrangements had to be made for the care of our three preschool children. It was a hectic time in our lives and the trip preparation added to the confusion. But when we experienced the land of the Bible, we found not only a place of great interest, but also a place of quiet, deep

reflection. We were overcome with the multiple layers of history and biblical events – so much so, that the trip was even more meaningful in the months that followed, as we reflected on each site and the way it made biblical stories become three dimensional. The time away from the pressures of everyday life and the stimulation of our mind, the stirring of our soul, and rest for our bodies was a rejuvenating experience. We had new energy to invest in our family and our jobs.

There are many things that need the trumpet of jubilee sounded in our lives:

- ✘ Financial burdens
- ✘ Family stressors
- ✘ Health concerns
- ✘ Spiritual drought
- ✘ Personal failures
- ✘ Life disappointments

There are no trumpets that are going to cause all of these things to be given a fresh start. However, beginning again is one of the great hopes of the Christian faith. Without it, the term "Good News" [Gospel] has little meaning.

This summer is a great time to plan a personal jubilee. It may take some time to hear the trumpet, but the plan and anticipation may be part of the hope. After all, the Jews would wait 50 years.

Personal Jubilation Plan

- 1 Identify** a repeating stressor. For many of us, it is something that cycles through often, i.e. lack of discipline in eating, Bible study, time management and personal relationships.
- 2 Seek wise counsel.** This may include: reading Christian books on the trouble area, seeking personal counsel from a professional counselor, talking to a respected person of faith.

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Bill Heston

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3 Develop a **plan**. Write out what it would take for us to take the energy away from our stressor, i.e. if it is financial, it would mean preparing a reasonable budget and following it strictly; for health, it would mean mapping out a healthy regimen and trust a support group [First Place meetings] for accountability and encouragement.

4 **Believe** that God is the God of new beginnings. It is not up to us to make miracles happen; every good thing begins and ends with God. We have the joy of joining what God desires to do.

5 **Budget** the resources it takes to make it happen. The narrow path must be chosen; anyone can travel the broad way. Set aside the time, money and energy that it will take to be set free.

It may be as simple as a ten-minute time alone on the patio reading a brief devotional, eating out less, stopping spontaneous buying, joining a First Place group or taking a trip of a lifetime. Whatever it is that will let you hear the "trumpet of jubilee," remember it will require that you do some things differently than you are currently doing. My friends who are in recovery programs have taught me...

"If we keep doing the same ole' things, we will keep getting the same ole' results."

It is time for a new beginning – it is time to hear the welcome sound of Jubilee. Fresh starts are not just for our relief and peace; they can also be our gift to everyone we encounter.

So for everyone's sake, let's get 're-jubilated'.

Bill Heston

Dr Bill Heston is the Director of Senior Adults and Planned Giving at the First Presbyterian Church of Houston.

Coming Events

Leadership Summit

July 28-30, 2005

"THRIVE in 2005"
Houston's First Baptist Church
Houston, Texas
Contact: Nancy Taylor
(800) 727-5223, X403 or
ntaylor@firstplace.org

Area Leaders' Meeting

August 20, 2005

9:00 AM - 12:00 Noon
Torrance First Baptist Church
Torrance, CA
Email: mark@firstplace.org
Cost: \$5.00
Please RSVP

First Place Workshops

August 13, 2005

9:00 AM - 12:00 Noon
Church of Christ Conference Rm
Figtree, NSW, AUSTRALIA
Bookings Essential; see First Place website for information.

November 5, 2005

9:00 AM - 11:30 AM
Church of Christ -
Conference Room
Figtree, NSW, AUSTRALIA
Check website for additional information.

September 9-10, 2005

Christian Life Centre
Toronto Ontario CANADA
Contact: Gospel Light Canada
Phone: (800) 366-4486
Email: gospellight@rgm.ca
Guest Speaker: Carole Lewis

First Place Rally

August 20, 2005

6:00 PM
Colonial Hills Church;
Southaven, MS
Contact: Roger & Darlene Batts
Phone: (662) 280-9986 or
Email: battsbunch@aol.com
Guest Speaker: Beverly Henson

September 10, 2005

First Place Picnic/Canoe Day
10:00 AM
Audley at Royal National Park
Sutherland Shire, AUSTRALIA
Phone number: 0242718800

F.O.C.U.S. Week 2005

October 6-13, 2005

Round Top, Texas
Contact: Lisa Lewis,
llewis@firstplace.org

September 23-24, 2005

First Place Mini Retreat
Faith Community Bible Church
Bremerton, WA
Contact: Jeannie Wall
Phone: (360) 782-2284
Email: jean.wall@comcast.net

Conferences

September 16-17, 2005

"Dare to Dream"
New Hope Baptist Church
1401 Loveland-Madeira Road
Loveland, Ohio 45140
Contact Janet Kirkhart by
phone at (513) 677-5377
or by email at
janetfirstplace@fuse.net

October 22, 2005

Spring Creek Church
Pewaukee, WI
Contact: Jenn Krogh
Phone: (920) 388-3531
Email: wifirstplace@hotmail.com
Guest Speaker: Nancy Taylor





Hints & Pinches

JUBILATION!

Any excuse for a celebration!

Everyone loves a party! Be creative when deciding what kinds of food to serve for your guests. Food preparation should be fun. Get them involved with the menu! Consider serving a potluck spaghetti bar by offering a variety of sauces. Try a simple soup dinner, make-your-own sandwiches, salad bar, taco bar, baked potato bar, fruit ices or smoothies. A BBQ could feature beef or chicken kabobs, salmon or fish steaks, or pork roast. And nothing beats a great burger!

Simple food recipes, like marinated vegetable salads or pasta dishes, can be made ahead. If necessary, just pop them in the microwave or oven for fast easy preparation the day of your dinner party celebration or better yet, serve cold.

Theme party decorations can extend to flatware. Roll flatware in a colorful napkin tied with decorative ribbon. Place it in a basket at the end of the buffet table, so guests won't have to balance food and utensils while they serve themselves.

For safety reasons, just remember to fit the meal to the season and to your fridge and oven space. Then enjoy the party!

Scott Wilson

Other Burger Ideas

Exchanges vary depending on portion size
Plan on 6 patties per pound.

Red, White and Blue Jubilation Burger

Top each grilled patty with a thick slice of tomato (red), sliced onion (white), and a little crumbled blue cheese (blue). To serve, stick a small American flag into the top of each bun.

Tex-Mex Burgers

Heat a can of chili with beans. Add 1 tablespoon taco seasoning to 1 pound of lean ground beef; mix and form into patties then grill as usual. Top each with a little chili, chopped red onion, and a sprinkle of 2% cheddar cheese.



Scott Wilson

First Place Food Consultant
firstplacechef@hotmail.com

Scott Wilson is a certified executive chef with the American Culinary Federation. If you have any questions regarding food preparation, you may write him at 7075 Red Fox Lane, Cumming, GA 30040.

Ciao! Burgers

Sprinkle a couple of teaspoons Italian seasoning into a pound of lean ground beef, mix and form into patties and grill as usual. Top each with a sprinkle of part-skim mozzarella cheese and let melt. Top each with 1 tablespoon prepared pizza sauce. Sprinkle with chopped fresh basil (optional).

Oriental Burgers

Add 1/4 cup teriyaki sauce, 1/4 cup diced water chestnuts and 2 tablespoons minced green onion into a pound of lean ground beef; Form into patties and grill as usual. Just before serving, baste again with a little teriyaki sauce.

SUPER DUPER CHEESE BURGERS

Serves 10

- 1-1/2 pounds extra lean ground beef
- 1 cup frozen diced onions
- granulated garlic, salt and pepper, to taste
- 1 cup reduced fat Velveeta
- 10 hamburger buns, low calorie
- pickle slices

Preheat large sauté pan on high 1–2 minutes. Add ground beef, onions, garlic, salt and pepper. Cook ground beef 5–7 minutes until meat is brown and no pink remains. Stir frequently and break up meat as it cooks. Drain ground beef, if needed, and return to heat. Stir in cheese sauce. Simmer 2 minutes, stirring occasionally. Place 1/2 cup of mixture on toasted hamburger buns. Serve with pickle slices or with a salad and assorted raw vegetable tray.

Exchanges: 3 meats, 1-1/2 breads, 1-1/2 fats



Winning Words for First Place Losers

**The end of a matter is better than its beginning, and patience is better than pride.
Ecclesiastes 7:8**

Addiction is a cunning, baffling and powerful disease that is characterized by “stinkin thinkin”—a faulty thought process that allows the addict to justify their out-of-control behavior. Nowhere does this disordered thought pattern show itself more poignantly than in the addict’s ability to turn jubilation, an occasion for celebration and thanksgiving, into an excuse to engage in self-destructive behavior.

In an attempt to combat this disordered thinking, addictions counselors give recovering addicts a relapse prevention tool aptly called, “play the tape all the way through.” With those words we ask the addict to look past the temporary pleasure of the moment and consider where that particular behavior will lead. In other words, instead of focusing on the high they will get from indulging their addiction, they are asked to stop long enough to see the predictable consequences of their behavior; to look past the transitory good feelings and to focus on the not-so-pleasant end result. Instead of anticipating the temporary thrill of the rush, they are asked to imagine the shame, remorse and guilt associated with falling into old behavior--one more time. Once they have considered the negative consequences of the behavior, the addict is then asked to play another tape through. This time they are asked to picture themselves resisting the temptation to indulge their addiction. They are to visualize how good they will feel when they graduate from the inpatient program, when they take a 5-year sobriety token, when they can hold their head high and give good advice to others struggling with addiction. Playing the tape through is a powerful tool for combating the immediate-gratification mentality that is the hallmark of addiction.

“Play the tape all the way through” is excellent advice for those of us in the First Place program too. Much like the “stinkin’ thinkin” that tells the recovering addict it is okay to abandon the sound principles of recovery for the temporary pleasure of a “high,” we also use jubilation as an excuse to indulge our craving for food that feeds our addiction.



Elizabeth Crews
Addictions Counselor & Educator
firstplaceloseers@cox.net

Elizabeth Crews is a licensed addictions counselor & educator, a Bible teacher and a First Place Networking leader in San Diego, CA. To subscribe to Winning Words for First Place Losers—a free daily e-mail devotional written by Elizabeth—write to firstplaceloseers@cox.net and ask to be added to the First Place devotional subscriber’s list.

When temptation comes, we need to stop long enough to picture the end results of our immediate gratification mentality. Instead of focusing on how good the food will taste, we need to picture the predictable, and not-so-pleasant, consequences of our behavior. We need to visualize ourselves at our weekly meeting, embarrassed and making excuses for our lack of self-control. We need to imagine the guilt and remorse we will experience because, once again, we have failed to keep our commitment to healthy eating. We begin to picture the morning after the indulgence as we tearfully write this out-of-control eating episode in our prayer journal.

Having pictured the negative consequences, we then begin to anticipate how good we will feel if we resist the temptation. We visualize the joy of sharing our victory at our next First Place meeting. We imagine the exhilaration of reaching our goal weight. We envision standing before our Master and receiving His praise because we did not yield to the “stinkin’ thinkin” that told us we could experience the joy of jubilation when we were outside of our Lord’s will and way! Today, I pray we will all utilize the valuable tool of “play the tape all the way through.”

It is one of the weapons in our First Place arsenal that allows us to use our imagination in a way that brings glory to God, gives us success in First Place and allows us to have a jubilant celebration because we are keeping Him first in all things.

***You can never solve a problem
on the level it was created.
--Albert Einstein***

Elizabeth Crews